DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 410 601 CS 509 553

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TITLE Instructional Design of a University Public Speaking Course.
PUB DATE 1997-09-00
NOTE 15p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Kentucky Communication Association (Dawson Springs, KY, September 19-20, 1997).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Class Activities; Course Descriptions; *Course Objectives; Higher Education; *Instructional Design; Learning Activities; Models; *Public Speaking; Undergraduate Students
IDENTIFIERS *Southern Arkansas University

ABSTRACT

This paper provides a unit of instructional design for teaching an undergraduate public speaking course at Southern Arkansas University. According to the paper, the unit, consisting of 6 lessons, is designed to be taught in a 50-minute period 3 times each week. The paper points out that students are given many opportunities to practice the research, outlining, and delivery skills necessary to utilize the information imparted and learned. It notes that these lessons set the groundwork for major graded presentations delivered later in the term. The paper offers the ASSURE model for this unit--Analyze Learners (A); State Objectives (S); Select Media and Materials (S); Utilize Materials (U); Require Learner Performance (R); and Evaluate/Revise (E). Each step of the model is delineated in the paper, with various activities, procedures, and objectives discussed. (NKA)

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ED 410 601

Kentucky Communication Association
Annual Meeting
September 19-20, 1997
Dawson Springs, Kentucky

"Instructional Design of a University Public Speaking Course."

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1. Instructional Design Project

This is a unit of instructional design for teaching an undergraduate public speaking course at Southern Arkansas University. This unit, consisting of six lessons, is designed to be taught in 50-minute time periods three times each week. Students are given many opportunities to practice the research, outlining and delivery skills necessary to utilize the information learned. These lessons set the groundwork for major graded presentations delivered later in the term.

For this unit, I will use the **ASSURE** model. Its steps are:

1. **A**nalyze Learners
2. **S**tate Objectives
3. **S**elect Media and Materials
4. **U**tilize Materials
5. **R**equire Learner Performance
6. **E**valuate/Revise

2. Analyze Learners

The learners are primarily freshmen and sophomores at Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia, Arkansas. It is a state-supported institution with an enrollment of approximately 2,500 students. Speech 1113 is a required course in the General Education curriculum. Classes are randomly grouped, as students decide which of the eight sections they will take. Class sizes range from 15 to 25 students per section. Most students have never taken a high school speech course at the time of enrollment. Students are required to submit typed outlines, critiques and research materials for graded assignments. If students cannot type, they are encouraged to take a concurrent typing course or use a campus mentor to help them in the process. No formal or informal background in public speaking is a prerequisite for enrollment in the course.

* Pre Test

The instructor asks students to identify a class peer as the subject of a speech of introduction. Each student writes and delivers a one minute speech about the individual with which he or she is paired. Ten minutes of class time are used to collect data for these presentations. The instructor stresses that this is a fun exercise designed to eliminate the butterflies from students wary of taking a public speaking course. Peer and instructor opinion of student presentations is always positive and upbeat, imbuing class confidence

through Lesson # 6. At this point, impromptu speeches will be used as a post test for the unit.

3. State Objectives

After the first lesson the learners will:

> Be aware of all assignments and tasks they are responsible for in the course.

> Be aware of deadlines regarding graded and non-graded speech presentations, research exercises, peer critiques and attendance.

After the second lesson the learners will:

> Define specific aspects of effective oral communication delivery.

> Know the difference between conversational and monotonic delivery styles.

> Define the term extemporaneous speaking.

After the third lesson the learners will:

> Define the term communication apprehension.

> Analyze the components of communication apprehension.

> Write individual analyses of the negative effects of stage fright upon speech performance.

After the fourth lesson the learners will:

> Define the principles of writing effective peer speech critiques.

> Write practice critiques on selected presentations from videotapes of previous Principles of Speech students.

After the fifth lesson the learners will:

> Choose a topic for the demonstrative speech, which is the first graded class presentation.
> Type synopses of three relevant subjects for the demonstrative speech.

> Explain the significance of each subject in relation to a potential audience.

After the sixth lesson the learners will:

> Be aware of the importance of quick thinking and outlining skills in public speaking situations with little rehearsal time.

> Be prepared to speak in an impromptu manner.

4. Select Media and Materials

> VHS VCR and 19 inch television monitor with remote control

> Principles of Speech videotapes dating from Fall 1985 to Summer 1997

> *20/20* videotape on stage fright

> C-SPAN videotape of U.S. Senate speeches

> Principles of Speech academic course syllabus

> Text, Speech Resources: Exercises and Activities (second edition), Ellen Hay, Roxbury Publishing Company

> Personalized grade sheets

> Oral communication evaluation forms

> Note cards for outlining purposes

> Copies of demonstrative speech synopses prepared by former students

5. Utilize Materials

Lesson # 1: Introduction to Oral Communication

Objectives:

> Be aware of all assignments and tasks they are responsible for in the course.

> Be aware of deadlines regarding graded and non-graded speech presentations, research exercises, peer critiques and attendance.

Media and Materials:

> Principles of Speech academic course syllabus

> Text, pages 7-8, "Speaking and the Communication Process"

> Personalized grade sheets

> Oral communication evaluation forms

> Note cards for outlining purposes

Activities and Procedures:

I. Introduce students to public speaking

The teacher asks students how many have ever taken a high school public speaking course and solicits opinion from them about initial nervousness they may have about speaking in public.

II. Lecture on an overview of course

Hand out materials, discuss speech deadlines, and explain the relevance of each to the scope of the course. Ask students if they understand the requirements of them from handouts and lecture.

III. Examine first text reading

Students are asked to read the text section on "Speaking and the Communication Process" for discussion purposes at the end of the lesson. They are told this reading sets the stage for successful completion of the instructional unit.

IV. Closing comments

Solicit opinion from students about what has been discussed.

Lesson # 2: Delivery Styles

Objectives:

> Define specific aspects of effective oral communication delivery.

> Know the difference between conversational and monotonic delivery styles.

> Define the term extemporaneous speaking.

Media and Materials:

> Text, pages 115-116, "Instant or Slow Cooking: Comparing Modes of Delivery"

> C-SPAN videotape of U.S. Senate speeches

Activities and Procedures:

I. Lecture on delivery styles

Students are asked to follow along on the designated pages during a discussion on types of oral communication deliveries. Feedback is frequently solicited students if they have any questions about definitions of delivery styles.

II. C-SPAN videotape

Students view selected U.S. Senate speeches during floor debates. Which senators are speaking from few notes? Which senators are reading their speeches? Which senators have delivery styles peppered with "ers" or "ahs"? Students define which delivery style best defines individual senators.

III. Defining specific terms

Taking out sheets of paper, students are asked to write their own definitions of extemporaneous speaking, conversational and monotonic delivery styles at the end of the lesson for discussion purposes.

IV. Closing comments

Solicit feedback from students about what has been discussed.

Lesson # 3: Communication Apprehension

Objectives:

> Define the term communication apprehension.

> Analyze the components of communication apprehension.

> Write individual analyses of the negative effects of stage fright upon speech performance.

Media and Materials:

> *20/20* videotape on stage fright

> Text, pages 15-16, "The Jitters: Communication Apprehension"

Activities and Procedures:

I. Lecture of communication apprehension and stage fright

Students are inoculated into the process of keeping their nervousness at a minimum during their performances. What are their fears? What is the worst thing that could happen to them because of such apprehension?

II. 20/20 videotape

A segment from the ABC newsmagazine chronicles the public speaking fears of famous people, and how they have tried to overcome them. Class discussion after the video focuses on channeling nervousness into positive performance skills.

III. Text reading

Students read the section on communication apprehension. They write their own definitions of the term besides jotting down how they feel stage fright may hinder their performances. This is followed by a short class discussion.

IV. Closing comments

Solicit feedback from students about what has been discussed.

Lesson # 4: Critical Speech Analysis of Peers

Objectives:

> Define the principles of writing effective peer speech critiques.

> Write practice critiques on selected presentations from videotapes of previous Principles of Speech students.

Media and Materials:

> Principles of Speech videotapes dating from Fall 1985 to Summer 1997

> Oral Communication evaluation forms

> Text, pages 145-146, "Speech Critiques"

Activities and Procedures:

I. Lecture on critiques

Students are told about active listening, audience analysis and critical thinking skills. Class discussion concerns the differences between constructive criticism and negative feedback. How can negative comments affect student work?

II. Text reading

Students read the section on speech critiques and are to define the term in their own words. The teacher asks students always to be upbeat in their critiquing styles, as many respond poorly to mean-spirited comments.

III. Principles of Speech videotapes

After handing out evaluation forms, students critique previous individuals who have taken the course. Three speeches in their entirety are shown. The teacher begins class discussion concerning these student critiques.

IV. Closing comments

Solicit feedback from students about what has been discussed.

Lesson # 5: Demonstrative Speech Topic Selection

Objectives:

> Choose a topic for the demonstrative speech, which is the first graded class presentation.

> Type synopses of three relevant subjects for the demonstrative speech.

> Explain the significance of each subject in relation to a potential audience.

Media and Materials:

> Copies of demonstrative speech synopses prepared by former students

> Text, page 47, "Decisions! Decisions! Topic Selection Criteria"

Activities and Procedures:

I. Choosing a topic

The teacher gives a short lecture on the scope of ideas for demonstrative speeches. Students are told their potential topics must involve a process that they can logically demonstrate from beginning to end. Handouts of synopses from former students are used for illustrative purposes.

II. Text reading

Students read the section on topic selection to give them a better idea of how their demonstrative topic ideas can relate to an audience of their peers. Class discussion follows in the "Criteria" section of the reading.

III. Student topic selection

They are asked to select a demonstrative speech topic to be turned in at the end of the school day in the department mailbox of the teacher. Students must also explain why the class would find the potential subject interesting.

IV. Closing comments

Solicit feedback from students about what has been discussed.

Lesson # 6: Impromptu Speaking

Objectives:

> Be aware of the importance of quick thinking and outlining skills in public speaking situations with little rehearsal time.

> Be prepared to speak in an impromptu manner.

Media and Materials:

> Text, pages 85-86, "The Big Picture: Main Points and Thesis Statements"

> Note cards for outlining purposes

Activities and Procedures:

I. What is impromptu speaking?

Students are lectured about the many situations where they will be asked to speak with no practice. How can they be prepared for such circumstances? Are there quick outlining or practice tips that can help them succeed?

II. Text reading

Students are asked to visualize how they could easily adapt potential ideas into outlining show demonstrations in the text. This is followed by the teacher briefly outlining and delivering most short impromptu speeches.

III. Taking notes

Students are instructed on the most effective methods of taking simple or complex subjects and writing their essential elements on note cards. This allows for maximum eye contact and conversationality during all of their speeches.

IV. Closing comments

Solicit feedback from students about what has been discussed.

6. Require Learner Performance

Each lesson described in this public speaking unit compels students to subject themselves to tasks that have specific outcomes. The objectives have been designed to give public speaking students many tools, such as writing topics or critiquing their peers. Students have had time has set aside for them in each lesson to do these tasks. There are also ample opportunities for students during each class period to solicit feedback from the teacher.

7. Evaluate/Revise

The teacher is constantly evaluating student comprehension of the public speaking subject matter, and does this in a number of ways. Class discussion is built into each lesson so the teacher can determine if students are having any difficulties with the ideas mentioned in lecture, textbook readings or videotapes. Being closely attuned to student performance on a regular basis is important. Students who are quiet or who display uncomfortable nonverbal gestures in class are called on to make them feel part of the group. This strategy works best when it is applied early in the term. Lessons have been placed in a logical sequence that allows students to more easily pick up the techniques of being a competent public speaker.

Following the close of this unit of instruction, a public speaking post test is given.

* Post Test

Students are asked to bring four one-word topics on note cards to class. They are called on at random to select a topic, which cannot be their own, and prepare a non-graded impromptu speech with one minute of preparation time. Students must speak for one minute and have no fewer than four vocalics in their presentations. They turn in their note cards at the end of class.